

# Perform Salah Correctly

(From the Website of Darul Uloom Karachi)

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## Introduction

Salah is a pillar of Din. Doing it just right in accordance with Sunnah is the responsibility of every Muslim. Unfortunately, we go about performing the cardinal dictates of Salah in a carefree manner following our whims, hardly caring to see that those dictates have to be carried out in the manner they were passed on to us by the

Holy Prophet ﷺ

This is why most of our Salah offerings remain deprived of the gleams and blessings of Sunnah, although, following these dictates just right hardly takes any more time or labour. What is needed is a touch of concern. If we give a little time and some attention, learn the correct method and make a habit of it, then the time that we spend in making our Salah today would remain the same yet the Salah thus performed would have the advantage of having been made in accordance with Sunnah and its rewards and merits and its gleams and blessings would be much more than what you experienced earlier.

The revered Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, took great care while performing each single unit of the act of Salah, and while doing so, they continued learning about the Sunnah of the Prophet from each other. With this need in view, this

humble write had explained to a gathering the Sunnah method of Salah as mentioned by the Hanafi jurists and had pointed out to incorrect practices which seem to have gained currency. By the grace of Allah, the listeners found it very beneficial. Some friends wished to make this discourse available as a printed brochure so that a much larger number of people would be able to use it to their advantage. So, in this brief write-up, the objective is to explain the Masnun method of and the step-by-step way of putting it into practice with due etiquette. May Allah Almighty make it beneficial for all of us and give us the tawfiq it. Amin By the grace of Allah, there are a large number of books, big and small, dealing with the precepts of Salah.

Hence, presenting a comprehensive account of Salah problems and rulings is not the objective here, instead, the immediate concern is to relate a few important points which would help synchronize the form of Salah with the demands of Sunnah. Another aim is to sound a note of warning against mistakes and shortcomings that seem to have gained a lot of currency these days. Acting in accordance with the brief words of advice given here will, Inshallah, help make our Salah fall in line with Sunnah, at least in its outward appearance when a Muslim could humbly submit before his Lord.

تیرے محبوب کی یا رب! شاہت لکھے آیا ہوں  
حقیقت اسکو تو کر دے میں صورت لے کر آیا ہوں

Lord, here I am, bearing similarly to Your beloved, through in form only, yet hoping-  
--- You shall make it real.

وما توفیقی الا باللہ، علیہ توکلت والیہ انیب

And what get to do is by the help and support of Allah, in Him I place my trust and towards Him I turn passionately.

( Muhammad Taqi Usmani )


### **Before you begin the Salah**

Check the following and be sure that you are doing things the way they should be done

1. It is necessary that you face the Qiblah.
2. You should stand upright and your eyes should be focused on the spot where you make your Sajdah. Bending your neck and resting your chin on the chest is makruh (reprehensible). Similarly, standing in Salah while your chest is bent down is also not correct. Stand upright in a way that your eyes keep looking at the spot where you make your Sajdah.
3. Note that the direction of the fingers on your feet is towards the Qiblah and that your feet also have the same straight stance facing Qiblah. (Placing feet tilting to the right or left is contrary to Sunnah). Both feet should be in the direction of the Qiblah.

4. In between both feet, there should be a minimum span of four fingers of the hands as ready measure.
5. If you are making your Salah with jama'ah (congregation), make sure the line you are standing in is straight. The best method to make sure that the line is straight is that each person position the farthest ends of both his heels at the farthest end of the prayer-rug or at lines that mark out on rug from the other.
6. While in jama'ah, satisfy yourself by making certain that your arms are close to the arms of those who are standing on your right and left and that there is no gap in between.
7. It is impermissible, under all conditions, to let the lower portion of your ankles. It is obvious that its repugnance while standing for Salah increase much more. Therefore, be sure that the dress you are wearing is higher than your ankles.
8. Sleeves should be full, covering the whole arm. Only hands remain uncovered. Some people make their Salah with sleeves rolled up. This method is not correct.
9. It is makruh to stand for Salah while wearing clothes which one would not normally wear in public.

### **When you begin the Salah**

1. Make niyyah or intention in your heart to the effect you are offering such and such Salah. It is not necessary to say the words of the niyyah verbally.
2. Raise your hands upto your ears in a way that palms face Qiblah and the end of the thumbs either touch the lobes of the ears or come parallel to them. The rest of the fingers stay straight pointing upwards. There are some who would tend to turn the direction of their palms towards their ears rather than having them face the Qiblah. There are some others who almost cover their ears with their hands. There are still others who would make a faint symbolic gesture without raising their hands fully upto the ears. Some others grip the lobes of their ears with their hands. All these practices are incorrect and contrary to Sunnah. These should be abandoned.
3. While raising your hands in the manner stated above, say :  Allahu-Akbar. Then, using the thumb and the little finger of your right hand, make a circle round the wrist of your left hand and hold it. You should then spread out the three remaining fingers of your right hand on the back of your left hand so that these three fingers face the elbow.
4. Placing both hands slightly below the navel, fold them as explained above.

## When you are standing

1. If you are making your Salah alone, or leading it as Imam, you first recite Thana'

: **سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ** then Surah al-Fatihah, then some other Surah. If you are behind an

Imam, you only recite Thana' : **سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ** and then stand silent listening attentively to the recitation of the Imam. If the Imam's recitation is not loud enough for you to hear, you should be thinking of Surah al-Fatihah using your heart and mind without moving your tongue.

2. When you are reciting yourself, it is better that you, While reciting Surah al-Fatihah, stop at every verse and break your breath. Recite the next verse with fresh breath. Do not recite more than one verse in a single breath. For example, break your breath at

مالك يوم الدين then on الرحمن الرحيم then on الحمد لله رب العالمين

Recite the whole Surah al-Fatihah in this manner. But, there is no harm if, during recitation that follows, more than one verse has been recited in a single breath.

3. Do not move any part of your body without the need. Stand in peace - the more, the better. If you have to scratch or do something else like that, use only one hand and that too, under very serious compulsion using the least time and effort.

4. Transferring all the weight of the body on to one leg and leaving the other weightlessly loose to the limit that it shows a certain bend is against the etiquette of Salah. Abstain from it. Either you transfer your body weight equally on both legs or if you must channel your body weight on one leg, you have to do it in a way that the other leg shows no bend or curve.

5. If you feel like yawning, try your best to stop it.

6. When standing for Salat, keep your eyes looking at the spot where you make your Sajdah. Abstain from looking to your right and left, or front.

## When in Ruku

When you bend for Ruku', watch out for the following:

1. Bend the upper part of your body upto a point where the neck and back nearly level up. Do not bend any more or less than that.

2. While in Ruku', do not bend the neck to the limit that the chin starts touching the chest, nor raise it so high that the neck goes higher than the waist level. Instead, the

neck and the waist should be in one level.

3. In Ruku', keep feet straight. Do not place them with an outward or inward slant.
4. Place both hands on your knees in a way that fingers on both hands stay open. In other words, there should be space between every two fingers when you thus go on to hold the right knee with your right hand and the left knee with your left hand.
5. In the state of Ruku', wrists and arms should remain stretched straight. They should not bend, curve or sag.
6. Stay in Ruku', at least for a time during which سبحان ربى العظيم could be said three times calmly and comfortably.
7. In the state of Ruku', the eyes should be looking towards the feet.
8. Body weight should be evenly distributed on both feet and both knees should be parallel to each other.

#### **Returning to the standing position from Ruku**

1. While returning from Ruku', back to the standing position, see that you stand straight leaving no sag or droop in the body.
2. In this position as well, eyes should be fixed on the spot where you do your Sajdah.
3. Three are those who simply make a 'gesture' of rising from the Ruku' instead of rising fully and standing upright when it is time to do so and who, in that every state, when their body is still bent downwards, go on to do their Sajdah - for them it becomes obligatory that they make their Salah all over again. Therefore, abstain from it very firmly. Unless you make sure about having become perfectly straight in your standing position, do not go for Sajdah.

#### **When going down for Sajdah**

Remember the following method when going down for Sajdah:

1. Bending the knees first of all, take them towards the prayer floor in a way that the chest does not lean forward. When the knees have already been rested on the floor, the chest should then be lowered down.
2. Until such time that the knees have come to rest against the floor, abstain, as far as possible, from bending or lowering the upper part of the body. These days negligence in observing this particular rule of etiquette while getting ready to go for Sajdah has become very common. Many people would lower down their chest right from the start and go on to do their Sajdah. But, the correct method is what has been stated in

#1 and #2 above. Unless it be for a valid reason, this method should not be bypassed.

3. After having rested your knees on the floor, place your hands first, then the tip of the nose, then the forehead.

### **In Sajdah**

1. While in Sajdah, keep your head in between your two hands in a way that the end of the two thumbs come parallel to the ear-lobes.

2. In Sajdah, fingers on both hands should remain close together, that is, the fingers should be adjacent to each other leaving no space in between them.

3. The direction of the fingers should be towards the Qiblah.

4. The elbows should stay raised off the floor. It is not correct to rest the elbows on the floor.

5. Both arms should stay apart from armpits and sides. Never keep them tucked in.

6. Do not, at the same time, poke your elbows far out to your right and left causing discomfort to those making Salah next to you.

7. The thighs should not come in contact with the stomach-wall. The stomach and the thighs should stay apart.

8. During the entire Sajdah, the nose-tip should continue to rest on the floor.

9. Both feet should be placed upright on the floor with heels showing on top and all fingers turned flat on the floor in the direction of the Qiblah. Those who cannot turn all their fingers because of the physical formation of their feet, they will still do well to turn them as much as they can. It is not correct to place the fingers vertically on the floor just for no valid reason.

10. Be careful that your feet do not lift off the floor during Sajdah. Some people would their Sajdah while none of the fingers on their feet come to rest on the floor even for a moment. This way the obligation of Sajdah is not liquidated at all, as a result, the Salah too becomes invalid. Be very particular in abstaining from this error.

11. In the state of Sajdah, the least time you can give yourself should be sufficient

enough to say سبحان ربى الا على three times, calmly and comfortably. Raising the forehead immediately after having rested it on the floor is prohibited.

### **In between the two Sajdahs**

1. Rising from the first Sajdah, sit up straight, on the hams, calmly and comfortably.

Then go for the second Sajdah. Doing the second Sajdah after raising the head just a little bit and without becoming straight is a sin. If one does it like that, it becomes obligatory that the Salah be made all over again.

2. Spared out the left foot (like the blade of a hockey stick) and sit on it. Let the right foot stand vertically with fingers turned towards the Qiblah. Some people let both feet remain in upright position and sit on the heels. This method is not correct.

3. While sitting, both hands should be placed on the thighs but fingers should not taper down onto the knees., instead, the far ends of the finger tips should reach only as far as the beginning edge of the knee.

4. While sitting, let your eyes be on the lap.

5. Sit for a time during which سبحان الله could be said at least once and if you can sit for a time during اللهم اغفر لي وارحمني اوسترنى واجبرني واهدني وارزقني could be recited, it is better. But, reciting this during Fard (obligatory) Salah is not necessary. It is better to do so in Nafl Salah.

### **The second Sajdah and rising from it**

1. Go on to do your second Sajdah in the same manner by first placing both hands on the floor, then the nose-tip, then the forehead.

2. The complete form of Sajdah should be the same as mentioned in connection with the first Sajdah.

3. When rising from Sajdah, first raise the forehead off the floor, then the nose-tip, then the hands, and then the knees.

4. While rising, it is better not to lean for support off the floor, however, should it be difficult to get up from the floor because of body-weight, sickness or old age, making use of the floor for support is also permissible.

5. After you have risen back to your standing position, recite

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم before Surah al-Fatihah in the beginning of each raka'ah.

### **In Qa'dah**

1. The method of sitting in Qa'dah shall be the same as mentioned in connection with the method of sitting between Sajdahs.

2. When you reach **اشهد ان لا اله الا الله** while reciting **اتحيات** raise the shahadah finger (the fore-finger or the index finger) with a pointing motion and let it fall back at **الا الله**

3. The method of making a pointing motion is that you make a circle by joining your middle finger and the thumb, close the little finger and the ringfinger (the one next to it), then raise the shahadah finger in a way that it is tapered towards the Qiblah. It should not be raised up straight in the direction of the sky.

4. However, lower the shahadah finger while saying **الا الله** but retain, right through the end, the initial formation of the rest of the fingers you already had when making the pointing motion.

### **When turning for Salam**

1. When turning for Salam on both sides, you should turn your neck just enough that your cheeks become visible to the person sitting behind you.

2. When turning for Salam, eyes should be towards the shoulders.

3. When turning your neck to the right to say **اسلام عليكم ورحمته الله** make an intention that you are offering your Salam greetings to all human beings and angles on your right. Similarly, while turning for Salam to the left, have the intention of offering your Salam greeting to all human beings and angels present on your left.

### **The method of Du'a**

1. The method of Du'a is that both hands be raised high enough so that they come in front of the chest. Let there be some space between the two hands. Do not bring the hands close together nor keep them far apart.

2. When making Du'a, keep the inner side of the hands turned towards your face.

### **Salah For Women**

The method of Salah describe earlier is for men. The Salah as offered by women differs from that of men in the following aspects. Women should be careful about what is required of them:

1. Before they begin their Salah, women should make sure that their whole body, except the face, the hands and the feet, is covered with clothes. Some women offer their Salah with the hair on their head remaining uncovered. Some have their wrists left uncovered. Some women use scarfs so thin or small that their hair tresses are visible dangling down underneath. If, during the Salah, any part of the body, even if



it be equal to one-fourth, remains uncovered for a time during which one could say

سبحان ربّي العظيم (Subhana Rabbi-al-Azim) three times, the Salah itself would not be valid. However, should the uncovered portion be less than that, Salah would take place but the sin shall stay.

**2.** For women, making Salah in the room is better than doing it in the verandah and doing it in the verandah is better than doing it in the courtyard.

**3.** While starting the Salah, women should not raise their hands upto their ears, instead, they should raise them upto their shoulders, and that too, from within the scarf or other outer wrap being used. Hands should not be taken out of this cover.

**4.** When women fold their hands on the chest, they should simply place the palm of their right hand on the back of the left forehand. They should not fold their hands on the navel like men.

**5.** In Ruku', women are not required to straighten their backs fully like men. Women should bend less as compared to men.

**6.** In the position of Ruku', men should open up their fingers while placing them on the knees, but women are required that they place their hands on the knees with fingers close together, that is, there be no space between fingers.

**7.** Women should not stand on legs absolutely straight, instead, they should stand with knees slightly bent forward.

**8.** In Ruku', men are required to keep their arms stretched, away from the sides. But, women should stand with their arms close to their sides.

**9.** Women should stand with both feet close together. Specially, both their knees should just about be joined together. Let there be no separating distance between legs.

**10.** While doing Sajdah, the method prescribed for men is that they should not lower their chest until such time that their knees come to rest on the floor. But this method is not for women. They can, right from the start, lower their chest and go for Sajdah.

**11.** Women should do their Salah in a manner that the stomach-wall come to rest against the thighs and the arms stay close to the sides. In addition to that, women do have to position their feet, upright, they should spread them on the floor sliding them out towards the right.

**12.** Men are prohibited to place their elbows on the floor while making Salah. But, women should place the whole arm, including the elbows, on the floor.

13. When sitting between Sajdah and when reciting التحيات (at-Tahiyyaat), sit on the left hip, side both feet out to the side and let the left foot reset on the right calf of the leg.

14. Men are required that they be careful about keeping their finger upon when bending for Ruku', and keeping them close together in Sajdah, and then, leave them as they are during the rest of the Salah, when they make no effort either to close or open them. But, it required of women, under all conditions, that they keep fingers close together, that is leave no space between them. This is required all along in Ruku', in Sajdah, between two Sajdah and in the Qa'dahs.

15. It is makruh (reprehensible) for women to make a jama'ah (congregation) The very act of offering their Salah alone is better for them. However, should mahram-members of the family be making their Salah with jama'ah within the house, there is no harm if they join in with them in the jama'ah. But, in a situation like this, it is necessary that they stand exactly behind men. They should never stand next to them in the same row.

### **The Masjid Some Essential Rules Of Conduct**

1. While entering the Masjid, recite the following Du'a:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

( I enter with the name of Allah and with the prayer that Allah bless His Messenger and bestow upon him. O Allah, open for me the doors of Thy mercy.)

2. Immediately on entering the Masjid, make an intention that 'I shall be in I'tikaf for whatever time I stay in the Masjid: By doing so, Insha'-Allah, the spiritual reward of I'tikaf can also be hoped for.

3. Following entry into the Masjid, it is better to sit in the front row. But, in case space in the front has already been taken up, sit wherever you find an opening. Advancing forward by leap-frogging people's necks is not permissible.

4. Salam greeting should not be offered to those already sitting in the Masjid and busy in Dhikr or recitation of the Qu'ran. However, should one of them be not so engaged and looking at you on his own, there is no harm in offering such Salam greeting to him.

5. If you have to offer Sunnah or Nafil Salah in the Masjid, select a spot where there is the least likelihood of people crossing in front of you. Some people start up their Salah in the back rows while ample space remains open in the front. Because of this act of theirs, it becomes difficult for other to cross over and they have to make a long detour to reach open sitting spots. Offering Salah in this manner is a sin in itself, and should a person happen to cross in front of the person making his Salah, then this sin of his crossing over in that manner will also rest on the shoulders of the person

making such a Salah.

**6.** After entering the Masjid, if you find that you are there a little ahead of the Salah timing, then, before you sit down, make two raka'ahs with the intention of Tahiyah al-Masjid. This has great merit. If there is not time for that, you can combine the intention of Tahiyah al-Masjid within the Sunnah Salah. And if, you do not have the time even to make your Sunnah Salah and the jama'ah is ready, this intention could also be combine with that of the Fard Salah.

**7.** As long as you sit in the Masjid, keep doing Dhikr. Specially, keep reciting the following Kalimah devotedly:

سبحان الله والحمد لله ولا اله الا الله والله اكبر

Sanctified is Allah and for Allah is all praise and there is no god but Allah is great.

**8.** Do not engage yourself in unnecessary conversation while sitting in the nothing else that may disturb those devoting to their 'Ibadah of Salah or Dhikr.

**9.** If the jama'ah is ready, fill in the front rows first. If space is open in the front row, it is not permissible to stand in the back row.

**10.** From the time when the Iman takes his place on the Mimbar to deliver the Friday Khutbah right through the end of the Salah, it is not permissible for anyone to talk, make Salah or to offer Salam to anyone or to answer Salam offered. However, should anyone start talking during this time, it is also not permissible that he be asked to keep quiet.

**11.** Sit during the Khutbah as you sit in Qa'dah when reciting at-Tahiyat. Some people sit hand folded during the first part of the Khutbah and then place their hands on the thighs during the second. This method is baseless. One should sit with hands on the thighs during both.

**12.** Abstain from everything that may spread filth or smell in the Masjid or cause pain to anyone.

**13.** When you see anyone doing something wrong, ask him not to do so, quietly and softly. Totally avoid insulting him openly, or rebuking him, or quarrelling with him